Chrysler, Ford and Saab recall 97,500 cars; new Monaco involved

By Jack Keebler and Rick Kranz
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

Chrysler Motors has announced a recall of 12,500 1990 Eagle Premiers and Dodge Monacos because the steering shaft may separate from the steering gear, causing a loss of control.

Meanwhile, Ford Motor Co. is recalling about 60,000 1990 Ford Tempo and Mercury Topaz models because of a problem with the engine cooling fan.

Saab-Scania of America Inc. is recalling 25,000 1986-1990 Saab 9000 models for a potential lamp switch overheating problem. More than half of the affected cars also are being recalled to fix chafing between a throttle cable and a brake fluid line.

Apparently, Chrysler engineers, hoping to improve steering-system isolation, changed the hardness of a rubber isolation coupler in the lower intermediate shaft of the Premier and Monaco steering column. The new couplers have separated from the shafts on several cars, resulting in a loss of steering control.

Chrysler said 1990 models built before March 5, 1990, are affected. A spokesman said he did not know the breakout of Premiers and Monacos in the recall. Monaco was introduced last month.

Chrysler officials said they became aware of the problem recently through four field reports. The company said it has a fix that requires replacement of the intermediate shaft with one that has a "restrained" coupling.

Steering problems have prompted a recall of 12,500 1990 Eagle Premiers.

"There have been no accidents and no injuries as a result of this problem," said the Chrysler spokesman. "We sent a letter to NHTSA March 15. So, we now have a recall number that registers us with the government. Our dealers have also been alerted, and the customers have been notified.

"The odd thing is, these are all low-mileage vehicles — most have only about 3,000 miles or something like that," the spokesman said.

Last week Ford Motor Co. said it is recalling 60,000 1990 Tempo and Topaz models equipped with 2.3-liter engines for a problem with the engine cooling fan.

Ford said some fans could wobble excessively during engine startup and run down, possibly rubbing against the fan shroud. That could cause the fan motor to overheat and damage the engine.

Ford estimates that 50,600 of the affected cars are in the United States and 9,700 are in Canada. The remaining cars are in export locations.

A Ford Parts and Service Division spokesman said the automaker knows of no accidents, injuries or deaths related to the engine fan problem.

Saab has recalled 25,000 1986-1990 Saab 9000 models equipped with automatic transmissions to correct a potential overheating problem in a lamp switch.

Saab also said that among those cars are about 14,000 1988 through mid-1989 models recalled to install a bracket to prevent chafing between a throttle cable and one of three brake fluid lines.

In the larger recall, Saab told owners an electric circuit will be modified to eliminate the possibility of overheating. Saab said that it was aware of no accidents or injuries associated with either problem.

Automotive News Staff Reporter Laura Clark contributed to this report.

1990 NEW CAR ASSESSMENT PROGRAM RESULTS

Vehicle	Type of protection	Test weight (pounds)	Head injury Driver	Head injury Passenger
Hyundai Excel 2-dr. hatchback	Motorized belts	2,660	696	419
Geo Prizm 4-dr. sedan	Manual belts	2,790	1,030	1,141
Acura Integra 4-dr. sedan	Motorized belts	2,915	585	637
Toyota Celica 2-dr.	Belts and driver air bag	2,980	834	685
Nissan Axxess 4-dr. hatchback	Motorized belts	3,433	1,051	654
Ford Taurus 4-dr. sedan	Belts and driver air bag	3,620	735	609

Source: NHTSA

3 cars on borderline in crash

By Diana T. Kurylko
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

WASHINGTON — The driver and front-seat passenger in a Geo Prizm could possibly suffer head injuries in head-on accidents at 35 mph, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said.

The Prizm was one of five 1990 vehicles crashed in the latest round of NHTSA's new-car assessment program. The agency will check 36 vehicles this model year by crashing them into a fixed barrier at 35 mph. So far 12 have been crashed.

The Prizm is equipped with a non-motorized automatic safety belt.

Also tested was the Toyota Celica, equipped with a driver-side air bag. Its score indicated that head injuries are possible for drivers and unlikely for passengers.

The Hyundai Excel 2-door hatchback, with a motorized belt, and the air bag-equipped Ford Taurus sedan both had scores that indicate head injuries are unlikely.

Results for the Nissan Axxess minivan indicated head injuries are possible for drivers but are unlikely for passengers. The Axxess has motorized safety belts.

In the test, NHTSA records the potential for head and chest injuries. The lower the score, the less likely of an injury. Head injury scores below 750 indicate injury is unlikely; scores of 750 to 1,250 indicate injury is possible; scores above 1,250 indicate injury is likely.

NHTSA upgrades probes of Camaro, Voyager

By Diana T. Kurylko
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

WASHINGTON — The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has upgraded a defect investigation of rear axles on the 1984-86 Chevrolet Camaro and Pontiac Firebird.

NHTSA has opened an engineering analysis of complaints that the axle shaft fractures, causing the loss of one wheel. Investigations typically move to the engineering analysis phase if the preliminary study shows a defect could exist.

The agency has received 169 owner complaints, alleging 132 accidents and 59 injuries. A recall, the next step in the defect investigation process, could involve 891,699 cars.

NHTSA also upgraded to the engineering analysis level its investigation of under-the-instrument-panel fires in the 1984-89 Plymouth Voyager and Dodge Caravan. NHTSA said the fires occur in the area of the emergency brake levers. A recall could affect 1.7 million minivans.

Three preliminary investigations involving the Chevrolet Corvette have been opened.

NHTSA is trying to determine whether electrical wiring on the 1990 Chevrolet Corvette could rub against the hood-release cable and become a potential fire hazard.

About 3,400 cars could be affected.

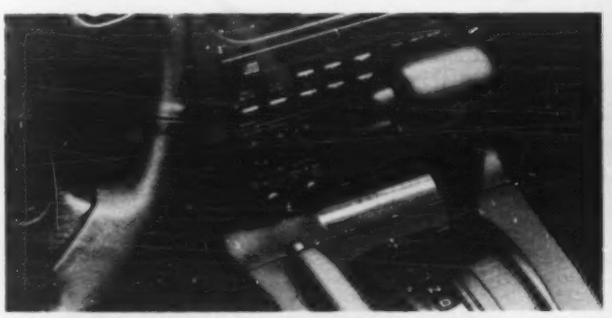
The 1990 Corvette ZR-1 is being investigated for a potential problem with the button on the parking brake lever that could disable the parking brake. About 1,000 ZR-1 models could have the problem.

Separately, NHTSA is investigating the safety-belt retractor assembly on the 1986-87 Corvette. The agency has received seven complaints — one alleging injury — that the belt does not work properly. About 33,000 vehicles could be affected.

NHTSA is also investigating 1982-89 Chevrolet S10 Blazer/GMC S15 Jimmy sport-utilities and Chevrolet Astro/GMC Safari vans. There have been complaints that the cable holding the spare tire breaks, dropping the tire onto the road.

Caprice police cruiser

Chevrolet is offering a police package for its revamped 1991 Caprice. Standard equipment includes a driver's side air bag, anti-lock brakes and a 5-liter V-8 that produces 170 horsepower at 4,000 rpm and 255 pounds-feet of torque at 2,400 rpm. But almost all police-package buyers are expected to choose the optional 5.7-liter V-8 that delivers 195 horsepower at 4,400 rpm and 285 pounds-feet of torque at 2,400 rpm. Chevrolet expects to retain its 60 percent share of the 60,000-unit police-car market.



Automatic transmission is a $720 option for Miata.

Miata offers automatic drive

By Kristine Stiven Breese
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

IRVINE, Calif. — Mazda Motors of America Inc. has begun offering an automatic transmission on its popular Miata MX-5 sports car. The price of the option is $720.

Rod Bymaster, product manager of sports and sporty cars, said the automatic will make the car more attractive in crowded urban markets.

"We're offering a choice to those buyers who spend two to three hours on the freeway every day," Bymaster said. "As much fun as a manual is on the weekends, people have to live with it on a daily basis, and many commuters, want an automatic for that reason."

Dealers said they have been asked about the automatic option, but don't expect it to be wildly popular. "A lot of people are going with the automatic for the comfort of driving, but it won't ever drive our sales," said Masen Fayyad, Mazda sales manager at Keyes for Cars of Van Nuys, Calif.

Bymaster expects about 10 to 15 percent of Miata buyers to choose the automatic.

Miata sales got off to a breakneck start last summer, reaching a monthly peak of 5,029 in August.

Sales have since leveled off at a lower figure. Last month, Mazda sold 2,510 Miatas, bringing the total since its June launch to 28,414.

Safety group urges second look at Toyota cruise control

By Diana T. Kurylko
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

WASHINGTON — The Center for Auto Safety has charged that the 1985-88 Toyota Camry and Corolla suffer from a "sudden acceleration" problem and has asked the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to begin an investigation.

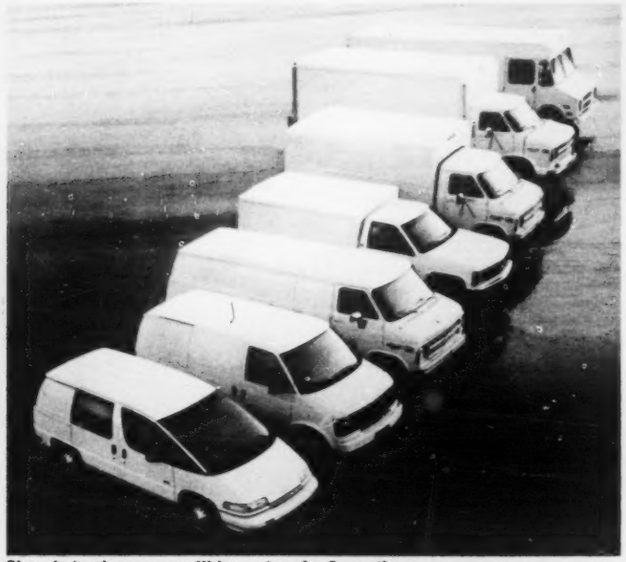
The call was prompted by Toyota's Feb. 28 recall of the 1983-84 Camry and 1984 Corolla for a faulty cruise control system. NHTSA described it as a computer malfunction that could cause engine racing when the car is started with the cruise control in an "on" position.

Consumers have reported the same problem with the 1985-88 models, according to Sam Cole of the center's vehicle safety staff.

Cole said the center has received more than 30 reports of accidents involving the 1985-88 Camrys and Corollas. "We don't see any difference between what happened with these cars and the 1983 and 1984 models that were recalled," he said.

Toyota said it is unaware of any cruise control complaints affecting the later models.

The consumer group also alleged that Toyota is aware of defective cruise controls in many of its models and that the company has included the system in a list of secret warranties. The center has turned over 200 cruise control complaints to the Federal Trade Commission and has asked for an investigation.



Chevy's truck caravan will be on tour for 3 months.

Chevy trucks on tour

Commercial business heavily emphasized

By Joseph Bohn
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Two Chevrolet vehicle convoys are touring the country to demonstrate the division's commitment to the commercial truck business.

General Motors' consolidation of all medium-truck marketing under GMC Truck a few years ago created the impression that Chevrolet was de-emphasizing commercial sales.

The new "Sidewinding America" multimillion-dollar extravaganza, in which Chevrolet is winding through 110 cities with two 23-vehicle caravans, seeks to dispel that notion.

The tours began in mid-March and continue for three months. Included are stops for five days in each of Chevrolet's 22 geographic branches.

J.C. "Jim" Perkins, Chevrolet general manager, said, "Sidewinding America is Chevrolet's attempt to reach out to the people who actually use or buy our trucks for commercial use."

The information — for invitation-only guests — will be tailored for various vocations in different parts of the country for each 2½-hour stop. The applications discussed will include wreckers, logging, snow plowing, farming, construction, bakery delivery and catering.

The Chevy trucks on hand and on film range from an S-10 pickup to medium-duty models, with various configurations of all vehicles.

Potential customers being invited include dealers, managers, salespersons, manufacturers and distributors of commercial equipment, and "end users," including people who buy trucks for their businesses.

Large and small fleet buyers are being targeted.

Chevrolet is including its new 1991 model chassis cab in the tour. It is scheduled to be introduced this fall.

The 1991 model 15,000-pound gross vehicle weight chassis cab comes in 60-inch, 84-inch and 108-inch cab-to-axle lengths. It will be used in various applications, ranging from "hot shot" commercial towing to wreckers.

Commercial trucks represent 26 percent of overall Chevrolet truck sales and 24 percent of total industry truck sales.

Chevrolet's Sidewinding America display is fully self-contained, and is designed to be assembled on any 200-foot by 200-foot flat surface. The caravan carries its own generators, and does not require any external power source to run its audiovisual and computer equipment.

It includes a 70-foot by 70-foot tent, capable of seating 200 people. The tent requires no stakes, poles or ropes; it is supported by four Chevrolet pickups. It is held up by a 41-foot crane mounted on a Chevrolet medium-duty chassis.

Recreational Vehicle Wholesale Deliveries

	Jan. 1990	Jan. 1989	% change	1 mos. 1990	1 mos. 1989	% change
Travel trailers	5,300	4,900	+ 8.2	5,300	4,900	+ 8.2
Park Trailers	600	700	−14.3	600	700	−14.3
Travel trailers—fifth wheel	2,800	2,700	+ 3.7	2,800	2,700	+ 3.7
Folding camping trailers	3,400	3,000	+ 2.7	3,400	3,000	+ 2.7
Truck campers	600	600	+ 0.0	600	600	+ 0.0
Towable RV total	12,700	11,900	+ 6.7	12,700	11,900	+ 6.7
Conventional (type A)	2,600	3,100	−16.1	2,600	3,100	−16.1
Van Campers (type B)	400	300	+33.3	400	300	+33.3
Chopped vans (all)	1,400	1,800	−22.2	1,400	1,800	−22.2
Motor home total	4,400	5,200	−15.4	4,400	5,200	−15.4
Van conversions	13,800	15,300	− 9.8	13,800	15,300	− 9.8
TOTAL ALL RVs	30,900	32,400	− 4.6	30,900	32,400	− 4.6

Source: Recreation Vehicle Industry Association

GMC hopes restructuring strategy, new products mean bigger sales

By Joseph Bohn
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

General Motors is seeking to recapture first place in the medium-duty market by reorganizing some of its operations and offering new products.

Ray E. Rota, general sales manager of GMC Truck Division, said GM held the No. 1 spot in medium-truck sales for four calendar years before relinquishing it to Navistar International in 1988.

In 1989, Ford Motor Co. forged ahead of Navistar by capturing 40.58 percent of Classes 4-7 on sales of 67,705 trucks.

Second-place Navistar, with 43,514 sales in that segment, took 26.08 percent of the market. GM, with 38,539 sales, had 23.10 percent. The rest went to importers, selling through their independent distribution channels.

GM's goal is to capture 30 percent of the medium-duty market in 1990, 33 percent in 1991 and more than 35 percent by 1992. It is shooting for 40 percent of the market by 1993-94, according to Rota.

GM's Truck & Bus Group, which handles medium-duty manufacturing and marketing for the company, is realigning its operations and introducing new products to achieve those goals.

GMC has changed its field organization, assigning new account executives to work in the field with dealers in marketing trucks.

They are responsible for contacting dealers and assisting them in training, and for calling on body builders, body equipment companies and retail fleets in conjunction with the dealers.

This team of field account executives "will work with the dealer to develop marketing plans and programs that will address the needs of that particular dealership area. That's a very positive cultural change for us," Rota said.

One of GM's major requirements is that each of its medium-duty dealers be a full-service Caterpillar engine dealer by August.

The Caterpillar 3116 is an optional engine in the GMC Topkick and Chevrolet Kodiak.

GM is still selling a lot of gasoline engines in its Topkick/Kodiak models. Gasoline engines account for about 20 percent of medium-duty sales industrywide, Rota said, but they account for more than 35 percent of GM's truck orders.

He attributed that to the "people and funds" GM invested in bringing out a new line of fuel-injected medium-duty gas engines at a time when some competitive manufacturers switched entirely to diesel engines.

GM will have to compete head-to-head with Ford's Class 4 Super Duty if it hopes to regain the lead in the medium-duty segment.

GM has a new Class 455 slated for the 1991 model year. The truck will be new from the ground up, but it will use many of the mechanicals of its light-duty conventional pickup.

It will have a 15,500 to 16,000-pound gross vehicle weight capacity.

Ford retailed 25,648 Super Duty units in calendar 1989, capturing 94.88 percent of Class 4 sales.

Iveco, Grumman van venture

Iveco Trucks of North America has begun making Grumman Olson Kurbmaster walk-in van bodies available on its EuroTurbo chassis. The Iveco rail chassis has been engineered specifically for walk-in body applications.

BRIEFS

Bus groups eye NTEA

WASHINGTON — Representatives of seven Type A and Type B school bus manufacturers met with the National Truck Equipment Association to discuss forming a product division within the group.

The school bus representatives discussed regulatory and industry issues facing manufacturers of school buses built on converted vans and van cutaway chassis.

Irv Kushner, president of TPI Sturdicorp of Suffern, N.Y., and chairman of the group, said bus manufacturers face many industry issues and concerns which they can deal with more productively and efficiently as a group.

The manufacturers' goals are to give unified responses to proposed federal government regulations, particularly those proposed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

They are also seeking to become more active as a group in developing a unified voice with the van and chassis manufacturers and in developing a public relations program for the industry to promote the building of safe, high quality vehicles.

New Caterpillar engine

MOSSVILLE, Ill. — Caterpillar Engine Co. has begun offering a new 3406B engine in the on-highway truck market.

The new Cat engine is rated at 460 horsepower at 1,900 rpm. It develops 1,600 pounds-feet of torque at 1,200 rpm, giving it a wide 750 rpm operating range. The 26 percent torque rise minimizes shifting with demanding terrain and loads.

Caterpillar's Programmable Electronic Engine Control system is an integral part of the fuel system and is a standard feature of the engine.

The engine features such design changes as a new crankshaft and wider connecting rod bearings, gallery-cooled pistons for more efficient heat dissipation and a new camshaft, injection nozzle and turbocharger.

GM, Durakon agreement

LAPEER, Mich. — Durakon Industries Inc. entered into an agreement with General Motors Truck and Bus Group to supply bedliners for GM light-duty pickups on an original equipment manufacturer basis.

Durakon will provide just-in-time delivery to three GM assembly plants from its Lapeer manufacturing plant.

Idealease purchases

ATLANTA — An investor group headed by William W. Dees, a former senior executive with Navistar International Transportation Corp., purchased two Idealease operations.

The two truck leasing operations include Idealease of Atlanta and Idealease of Kennesaw, Ga. They have three locations in the metropolitan Atlanta area.

Dees' group took over Central International Trucks Inc. with locations in Duluth and Atlanta and Heuer International Trucks Inc. in Kennesaw. Both dealerships were already members of Idealease Inc., a dealer-owned truck lease and rental organization in Chicago with 13,000 vehicles in service.

Changing Captives

Transplants take on the role

By: Al Rothenberg

Japanese transplant production in the United States is blurring what has been known as the "captive import market."

Blame it partly on the U.S. government's corporate average fuel economy regulations.

"Captive imports, or cars of foreign origin sold by America's Big 3, do not help our domestic CAFE," said Joel Pitcoff, manager of research and analysis for Ford Motor Co. in Dearborn, Mich. "Domestic companies must separate CAFE data between U.S. output and products of overseas companies of which they are part owners." Cars produced in this country by transplants whose products carry less than 75 percent domestic components are measured as imports, but if domestic content can be raised past 75 percent, as Ford has done with Probe this year, the car can be part of the domestic fleet for CAFE purposes.

Early captive imports, which invaded the American market in the mid-1950s, came from totally owned European operations of General Motors, Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler Corp. Studebaker Corp., now defunct, held distributor rights to Mercedes-Benz cars.

Current captives, as defined by the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association, are vehicles imported from offshore facilities for sale by dealers of U.S. manufacturers. Their sales in 1989 totaled 340,590 cars, down 52,822 from 1988, according to MVMA.

But when Big 3 executives talk about captives, they like to include transplants.

For example, the Chevrolet Geo line, in addition to the Isuzu Metro and Storm that are built in Japan, includes the Prizm made by New United Motor Mfg. Inc., a joint venture of GM and Toyota Motor Corp. in Fremont, Calif., and the Tracker, a sport-utility built by CAMI Automotive Inc. of Ingersoll, Ontario, a joint venture of GM Canada and Suzuki Motor Co. Ltd.

"Chevrolet looks for a market of 280,000 Geos in 1990," said James B. Fitzpatrick, GM vice president in charge of the marketing and product planning staff. Prizm, at $12,000, is the flagship of the Geo line, which aims at the low end of the market, Fitzpatrick said.

"The Storm, which is really taking off, is a small sport car in the low end as compared to mid-sports like Camaro and Firebird and a luxury sport car like Corvette," he said.

"Tracker's a toy," Fitzpatrick said. "Admittedly, higher income people buy it, but they buy it for their kids. Suzuki Sidekick is a lot like it."

The GM executive notes the following demographics on Geo, LeMans and Chevrolet principal owners:

People buying their first car ever accounted for 23 percent of Geo, 26 percent of LeMans and 13 percent of domestic Chevrolet sales.

Customers who had purchased used cars, but were buying their first new car, accounted for 46 percent of Geo, 57 percent of LeMans and 33 percent of Chevrolet sales.

Median income of Geo and LeMans buyers was in the low $30,000 range compared to Chevrolet's $38,000.

Women drivers represented 60 percent of Geo and Chevrolet sales and 69 percent of LeMans.

Median age of buyers was 35 for Geo, 32 for LeMans and 40 for Chevrolet.

About 30 percent of all buyers had earned a college degree; and more than half the Geo and Chevy owners and 43 percent of LeMans customers were married.

Looking ahead, Japan and Korea are likely to remain the major overseas sources of Big 3 captives.

"We've looked at our German Opel (sold through Buick dealers in the '50s), but nothing has come of it," Fitzpatrick said. "We're not actively looking at Saab of Sweden, a recent GM affiliate, but down the road something may be possible. Who knows? We always go back and look at Opel because of its great product line."

Fitzpatrick rules out an import for Buick and Oldsmobile, explaining that their dealers don't want one. "There's no place for an import at Buick, which considers its products the premier American road cars," he said. "Oldsmobile is finally finding itself as a contemporary family car, and really has the compact and mid-sized markets covered anyway."

Chevrolet is a different story. "Chevy is counting on Geo to help regain the penetration it lost when it migrated out of the low-end market and left room for the imports to move in," Fitzpatrick said. "Now Chevy is trying to return there again." The division's last domestic product in the low-priced subcompact segment, the Chevette, perished about five years ago.

Ford has stayed in the lower segment with Escort and Tracer. Pitcoff counts just about any car with a foreign flavor as a captive, including the Probe built by Mazda Motor Manufacturing (USA) Corp. in Flat Rock, Mich., as well as GM's Cadillac Allante, assembled in Detroit with an Italian-made body, and Chrysler's Canadian-built Eagle Premier.

His definition of a captive import: "A vehicle produced by a foreign manufacturer, regardless of where it's built — Europe, Japan, Illinois, California — and badged for sale by an American manufacturer."

CAPTIVE IMPORT SALES
(Calendar years)

	1988	1989
Chrysler Corp.		
Dodge Colt	30,040	42,331
Plymouth Colt	28,259	37,554
Plymouth Vista	6,257	9,249
Dodge Vista	6,653	10,190
Chrysler Conquest	5,026	9,873
Eagle Summit	19,121	4,603
Medallion	3,907	14,712
Maserati	2,924	0
Total Chrysler	**102,187**	**128,512**
Ford Motor Co.		
Festiva	69,328	69,167
Merkur XR4Ti	4,017	5,745
Merkur Scorpio	4,748	9,516
Total Ford	**78,093**	**84,428**
General Motors Corp.		
Geo Metro	53,437	48,088
Geo Storm	62,232	68,347
LeMans	44,641	64,037
Total GM	**160,310**	**180,472**
Total Big 3	**340,950**	**393,412**

SOURCE: Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

He does not count his company's Mexican-made Tracer because its source is a Ford factory.

He sees the market becoming more fragmented and predicts more cooperative deals such as Ford and Mazda with the domestic Probe and Japanese MX6.

Said Pitcoff: "What happens if you want to be a full-line producer and be in an emerging market niche that presents a profit opportunity — or a profit risk — and you and your dealers are not represented in that niche?

"When it isn't viable to develop your own product because you lack engineering resources, manufacturing capacity or enough volume to fill a plant, or you don't have an existing platform to fill a market niche, you look for a partner. Probe's an example. We had a rear-drive V-8 Mustang for the traditional red, white and blue American audience. But other cars in that segment were primarily front-wheel drive, V-6 or turbocharged Japanese entries. We didn't have a platform for such a car and didn't want to invest in one for the kind of volume expected.

"Similarly, Mazda was looking for a facility here to add capacity and, partly, to get around the voluntary restraint agreement limiting Japanese exports to the U.S. It was also a hedge for Mazda against fluctuations of the yen versus the dollar.

"Out of that double dilemma, Mazda and Ford developed the idea of Flat Rock, a plant we could fill together."

Similarly, the Chevrolet-Toyota joint production of the Corolla and Nova, since renamed the Prizm, helped both producers.

Although Ford's captive-buyer demographics are close to GM's, Pitcoff said, "It's difficult to generalize. I don't think a person gets up in the morning and says, 'By golly, I'm going out and buy a captive.' "

Ford unsuccessfully tried to lure Americans to Merkur Scorpio and XR4Ti captives from Germany. While the company believes Merkurs met other imports head on for value, its dealers say customers preferred a loaded Sable with fwd and 6-passenger capacity for about the same price.

Although Ford Lio Ho Motor Co. builds cars in Taiwan, there are no plans to export them here. "Those products would only duplicate what we already have," Pitcoff said. "Futhermore, it's a different ball game today than in the middle '50s when there were no federal regulations. One of the major impediments today is that before you think about bringing a car in from abroad, you have to check with the regulatory area to determine its cost. Tooling investments for emission and safety controls can run into the tens of millions."

There are significant regulatory benefits for two companies with similar products. For example, since Probe and MX6, or Prizm and Corolla, have similar bumpers, weight, emission controls and engines, they certify for government standards together. The savings are considerable. □

Al Rothenberg is a freelance writer based in West Bloomfield Township, Mich.

Japanese post a gain, but import sales drop for month

By Kristine Stiven Breese
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Sales of imported cars dropped 4.46 percent last month, echoing February's 3.71 percent drop in domestic sales.

The import total was 193,312, down from 209,973 last year.

As a group, the Japanese were the only import segment to post a sales gain for the month, jumping 2.51 percent from the year-ago period.

European and Korean imports were down 16.65 percent and 23.84 percent, respectively.

With sales of 141,520 cars, the nine Japanese automakers accounted for 73 percent of all imported-car sales, up from 68 percent a year ago.

In addition, Japanese makers are increasing their presence in the U.S. market by boosting production of U.S.-built cars.

Among the Japanese, Mitsubishi, Toyota, Honda, Acura and Daihatsu were the gainers in import sales. Mitsubishi's jump was the biggest, with sales up 64.03 percent to 8,656. The only other double-digit improvement was Toyota's 15.92 percent climb to 34,104.

Honda's imported-car sales rose 8.35 percent, and Acura was up 5.85 percent. Daihatsu sold 1,027 cars, eight more than last year, for an increase of 0.79 percent.

Mitsubishi's sales were led by the Mirage, which accounted for nearly 60 percent of the company's total import sales.

The Corolla and Celica performed particularly well for Toyota, rising 44.42 percent and 70.74 percent, respectively.

Only three European makes made gains in February: Jaguar, Mercedes-Benz and Porsche.

Jaguar's 1,475 sales were up 8.38 percent; Mercedes climbed 4.85 percent to 5,811; and Porsche sold 725 cars, up 35.26 percent from 536 in February 1989.

In the closely watched Japanese luxury race, Honda's Acura Division still holds a commanding lead.

Acura sold 10,019 cars last month, up from 9,565 in February 1989. Lexus followed with 4,171. Infiniti, which was launched in November, trails the competition, having sold 1,075 cars in February and 2,146 cars in the first two months of the year.

In the cases of Lexus and Infiniti, sales have been split just about evenly between their entry-level models, priced below $25,000, and their high-end models, which list for $35,000 (Lexus) and $38,000 (Infiniti).

Although Nissan's import sales were down 15.53 percent last month, Stanza sales were up 82 percent from a year ago, to 3,614. The Stanza has been lagging, and its success in the competitive middle segment is seen as critical.

BMW saw sales decline across its line, as more buyers apparently consider the new Japanese luxury offerings. The BMW 3 series dropped 35.38 percent.

Audi fell 3.22 percent; its only gain was in the 100/200 series.

MARKET SHARES
Domestic, Import cars

	February Sales	Pct. of Total
Subcompact	179,125	24.69
Compact	178,878	24.66
Intermediate	251,733	34.70
Standard	96,439	13.29
Speciality	19,283	2.66
TOTAL	725,458	100.00

IMPORT CAR SALES BY MODEL

	Feb. 1990	Feb. 1989	2 Mos., 1990	2 Mos., 1989
ACURA	10,019	9,465	20,106	18,978
Integra	5,992	4,659	11,685	8,744
Legend	4,027	4,806	8,421	10,234
ALFA ROMEO	202	237	311	455
Milano	3	113	9	224
Spider	199	124	302	231
ASTON MARTIN*	5	5	10	10
AUDI	1,411	1,458	2,694	3,267
4000	0	9	0	19
5000	3	36	9	110
80	298	486	559	1,243
90	248	474	441	981
V8 Quattro	117	0	253	0
Coupe Quattro	68	0	127	0
100/200	550	320	1,060	620
100/200 Quattro	127	133	245	294
BMW	4,113	5,736	9,032	11,419
3-Series	1,746	2,702	3,752	5,471
5-Series	1,701	1,771	3,755	3,471
635 CSi	41	131	97	274
7-Series	564	948	1,292	1,816
M3	57	87	127	176
M5	0	41	4	90
M6	4	56	5	121
CHEVROLET/GEO	13,142	7,508	27,743	15,319
Geo Storm/Spectrum	4,912	3,826	11,393	7,940
Geo Metro/Sprint	8,230	3,682	16,350	7,379
CHRYSLER MOTORS	5,319	8,317	10,919	17,375
Colt	2,911	4,882	5,709	9,529
Conquest	65	381	413	854
Medallion	31	423	197	1,035
Summit	1,392	1,631	2,425	3,714
Vista	564	936	1,223	2,110
TC	356	64	952	133
DAIHATSU	1,027	1,019	2,429	2,123
FERRARI*	80	80	160	160
FORD Festiva	4,912	6,226	10,897	12,679
HONDA	17,923	16,541	33,794	32,099
Civic/CRX	4,665	4,191	8,604	7,902
Accord	10,548	9,176	21,309	18,192
Prelude	2,710	3,174	3,881	6,005
HYUNDAI	10,549	14,056	22,432	29,230
Excel	8,489	11,504	17,676	24,596
Sonata	2,060	2,552	4,756	4,634
ISUZU	226	1,251	434	2,800
I-Mark	174	1,065	343	2,420
Impulse	52	186	91	380
INFINITI	1,075	0	2,146	0
M30	645	0	1,064	0
Q45	430	0	1,082	0
JAGUAR	1,475	1,361	2,998	2,853
XJ6	1,096	1,027	2,182	2,163
XJS	379	334	816	690
LAMBORGHINI*	13	13	26	26
LEXUS	4,171	0	8,306	0
ES 250	1,388	0	4,307	0
LS 400	2,783	0	3,999	0
LOTUS*	27	27	54	54
MASERATI*	20	21	40	43
MAZDA	13,458	15,612	30,102	32,049
323	1,361	6,359	3,641	12,833
Protege	2,478	0	5,525	0
626	2,806	3,680	6,416	7,527
MX-6	1	233	11	454
Miata	2,510	0	5,362	0
929	964	1,441	2,028	2,948
RX-7	668	1,611	1,329	3,528
MPV	2,670	2,288	5,790	4,759
MERCEDES BENZ	5,811	5,542	10,465	10,578
190	1,027	846	1,849	1,829
300E 2.6/260E	124	226	178	471
300	2,008	1,947	3,660	3,341
300 SE	557	510	979	1,058
300SEL	306	275	564	531
420SEL	539	529	946	1,054
560SEL	415	417	763	820
560SL	612	600	1,070	1,142
560SEC	152	131	268	248
Tourist	71	61	188	84
MERCURY/MERKUR	1,425	4,465	3,928	9,654
Tracer	1,151	3,859	2,704	7,967
XR4TI	0	269	198	760
Scorpio	274	337	1,026	927
MITSUBISHI	8,656	5,277	24,356	10,316
Starion	3	111	5	296
Cordia	0	22	0	303
Tredia	0	0	0	5
Mirage	5,034	673	15,690	1,429
Galant	2,976	2,261	6,877	4,179
Sigma	164	0	335	0
Precis	401	1,549	1,264	3,218
Van/Wagon	78	119	185	344
NISSAN	25,646	30,361	52,957	59,469
Sentra	7,402	10,904	14,522	21,461
Pulsar	770	1,665	1,514	3,065
Stanza	3,614	1,985	6,926	4,237
Axxess	710	0	1,461	0
Maxima	7,591	8,595	16,861	17,002
240SX/200SX	3,380	5,706	7,412	10,525
300ZX	1,810	1,278	3,630	2,591
Hawaii	369	228	631	588
PEUGEOT	312	413	648	861
PONTIAC LeMans	2,731	3,604	4,138	7,341
PORSCHE	725	536	1,421	1,141
924S	64	14	64	42
944	0	62	56	141
944S	122	6	248	10
944 Turbo	96	38	161	78
911 Coupe/Carrera 4/2	246	162	370	340
911 Turbo	1	90	2	180
911 Cabriolet/Speedster	132	103	387	213
928S	64	61	133	137
ROLLS/BENTLEY*	100	100	200	200
SAAB	2,088	2,845	4,055	5,280
900	293	373	561	782
900S	267	472	533	1,000
900 Turbo	611	939	1,220	1,686
9000S	221	345	422	553
9000 CD	378	250	702	493
9000 Turbo	312	455	601	746
Tourist	6	11	16	20
STERLING	493	612	998	1,400
SUBARU	6,626	13,209	13,204	23,458
Hatchback	28	293	58	644
3-Door	18	564	56	1,153
4-Door Sedan	57	5,149	142	9,202
Legacy	3,702	0	7,665	0
Loyale	1,431	0	2,637	0
XT/XT6	160	843	291	1,464
Station Wagon	12	4,010	32	7,109
Justy	1,218	2,349	2,323	3,885
SUZUKI	515	559	1,130	1,106
TOYOTA	34,104	29,421	66,950	65,797
Corolla	9,090	6,294	16,678	14,224
Tercel	8,033	7,629	15,258	14,833
Celica	6,408	3,753	12,489	8,350
Supra	544	1,172	1,510	2,595
Camry	4,154	6,522	8,842	17,153
Cressida	635	1,562	1,234	3,688
Land Cruiser	328	431	779	910
Van	443	368	1,279	867
4Runner SR 5	4,098	1,277	8,341	2,405
MR2	371	413	540	772
VOLKSWAGEN	8,668	8,825	16,965	17,854
Cabriolet	486	686	965	1,056
Corrado	349	0	643	0
Jetta	3,745	3,569	7,805	7,229
Golf/GTI	916	1,403	1,868	2,856
Passat	760	0	760	0
Vanagon	413	318	842	593
Quantum	4	112	10	267
Scirocco	0	160	5	352
Fox	1,995	2,577	4,067	5,501
VOLVO	6,301	7,510	15,135	16,649
240 Series	2,141	3,287	6,184	7,025
740 Series	3,409	3,124	7,407	7,570
760 Series	852	977	1,382	1,798
780	71	118	125	210
Tourist	18	4	37	46
YUGO	544	761	1,423	1,631
IMPORT TOTAL	193,912	202,973	402,606	413,674

*—Estimate

Compiled by Karen Dobkowski

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AUCTION DATES

Chrysler Motors

March 27 — Hatfield Auto Auction, Hatfield, Pa.; America Auto Auction, Walpole, Mass.; Arena Auto Auction Inc., Bolingbrook, Ill.; Salt Lake Auto Auction, Salt Lake City; South Seattle Auto Auction Inc., Kent, Wash.; Greensboro Auto Auction Inc., Greensboro, N.C.; and San Antonio Auto Auction, San Antonio, Texas

March 28 — A.D.E. of Birmingham, Moody, Ala.; Butler Auto Auction, Gibsonia, Pa.; and Denver Auto Auction, Aurora, Colo.

March 29 — Northway Auto Exchange, Clifton Park, N.Y.; Aptco Auto Auction Inc., Taylor, Mich.; Omaha Auto Auction, Omaha, Neb.; Golden Gate Auto Auction, Fremont, Calif.; Ark-La-Tex Auto Auction Inc., Shreveport, La.; Florida Auto Auction of Florida, Ocoee, Fla.; and Amarillo Auto Auction Inc., Amarillo, Texas

March 30 — Manheim Auto Auction, Manheim, Pa.

Ford Motor Co.

March 27 — Harrisonburg Auto Auction, Harrisonburg, Va., and Bay Cities Auto Auction, Hayward, Calif.

March 28 — Texas Hobby Auto Auction, Houston; Metro Auto Auction of Kansas City, Lee's Summit, Mo.; and Greater Tampa Bay Auto Auction, Tampa, Fla.

March 29 — Auto Auction of Billings, Billings, Mont.; Denver Auto Auction, Aurora, Colo.; Nashville Auto Auction, Nashville, Tenn.; and Skyline Auto Exchange, Fairfield, N.J.

April 3 — Greater Chicago Auto Auction, Chicago, Ill.; Newburgh Auto Auction Inc., Newburgh, N.Y.; South Seattle Auto Auction, Kent, Wash.; Northway Auto Auction, Clifton Park, N.Y.; Clanton's Auto Auction, Darlington, S.C.; Fort Worth Auto Auction, Fort Worth, Texas; Mississippi Auto Auction, Hattiesburg, Miss.; Southern California Auto Auction, Fontana, Calif., Omaha Auto Auction, Omaha, Neb.

April 4 — Northway Auto Auction, Clifton Park, N.Y.; Clanton's Auto Auction, Darlington, S.C.; Fort Worth Auto Auction, Fort Worth, Texas; Mississippi Auto Auction, Hattiesburg, Miss.; Southern California Auto Auction, Fontana, Calif.; Omaha Auto Auction Inc. Omaha, Neb.

April 5 — Manheim Auto Auction, Manheim, Pa.; Southwest Auto Auction, Chandler, Ariz.

April 11 — Concord Auto Auction, Acton, Mass.; Aptco Auto Auction, Taylor, Mich.; Texas Hobby Auto Auction, Houston; Indianapolis Auto Auction, Indianapolis; and Greater Tampa Bay Auto Auction, Tampa, Fla.

General Motors

March 26 — Dallas Auto Auction Inc., Grand Prairie, Texas

March 27 — Southern Auto Auction, East Windsor, Conn.; Dallas Auto Auction Inc., Grand Prairie, Texas; Manheim Auto Auction, Manheim, Pa., Auto Auction of Billings, Billings, Mont.; Florida Auto Auction, Ocoee, Fla.; and Harrisonburg Auto Auction, Harrisonburg, Va.

March 28 — Atlanta Auto Auction Inc., Red Oak, Ga.; Puget Sound Auto Auction, Auburn, Wash.; Clayton's Auto Auction, Darlington, S.C.; Indianapolis Auto Auction, Indianapolis; Southern California Auto Auction, Fontana, Calif.; Minneapolis Northstar Auto Auction Inc., Shakopee, Minn.; Puget Sound Auto Auction, Auburn, Wash.; Mississippi Auto Auction Inc., Hattiesburg, Miss.; Baltimore-Washington Auto Exchange Inc., Baltimore; and Omaha Auto Auction Inc., Omaha, Neb.

March 29 — Southwest Auto Auction, Chandler, Ariz.; Mid-Ark Auto Auction, North Little Rock, Ark.; Arena Auto Auction Inc., Bolingbrook, Ill.; Columbus Fair Auto Auction, Columbus, Ohio; and St. Louis Auto Auction, Bridgeton, Mo.

Toyota

March 27 — Southern California Auto Auction, Fontana, Calif.

March 28 — Greater Tampa Bay Auto Auction, Tampa, Fla.

March 29 — Denver Auto Auction, Aurora, Colo.

Model-year breakdown

Used-car sales, auction averages

Year	1st Half Jan.	1st Half Feb.	1st Half Mar.
1990	$10,730	$10,849	$11,109
1989	$9,016	9,222	8,910
1988	6,687	6,464	6,452
1987	5,413	5,346	5,185
1986	4,500	4,385	4,309
1985	3,770	3,812	3,601
1984	2,968	2,989	2,774
1983	2,263	2,297	2,167
Overall Average	$5,255	$ 5,686	$ 5,365

SOURCE: NADA Official Used Car Guide

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ONTARIO AUTO AUCTION CORP.
406 Lake Ave. North
Hamilton, Ontario
Canada L8E 3C2
(416) 560-4851
THURSDAY — 10:00 A.M.

MONCTON AUTO AUCTION
47 Edinburgh Drive
Moncton, New Brunswick
Canada E1E 2K6
(506) 857-0198
THURSDAY — 10:30 A.M.

HALIFAX-DARTMOUTH AUTO AUCTION LIMITED
15 Notting Court, Burnside
Industrial Park, Dartmouth
N.S., Canada B3B 1N2
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TUESDAY — 10:30 A.M.

WINNIPEG AUTO AUCTIONS INC.
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Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3C 2E6
THURSDAY — 10:30 A.M.

ALBERTA AUTO AUCTIONS (EDMONTON) LTD.
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THURSDAY — 11:00 A.M.

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Wednesday Auto Auction. Exit 49 on I-270. Columbus, Ohio. Every Wednesday. Call: Area 614-497-2000.

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A.D.E. of Memphis, 2650 Mt. Moriah Rd, Memphis, Tenn. 38115. 901-794-7700. Every Tues., 10 AM; every Thurs., 7 PM; Salvage Sale, 1st & 3rd Weds., 9 AM.

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INCENTIVE WATCH

CUSTOMER INCENTIVES

	Rebates	Finance Rates (Pct.) — Months — 24	36	48	60	Expiration Date
Chrysler Motors (1988-89 models)						
Chrysler	$1,000-$2,000	2.9	6.9	7.9	9.9	None
Dodge cars	$750-$1,500	2.9	6.9	7.9	9.9	None
Dodge trucks	$750-$2,500	2.9	6.9	7.9	9.9	None
Eagle	$1,000-$2,000	2.9	6.9	7.9	9.9	None
Jeep	$500-$1,500	2.9	6.9	7.9	9.9	None
Plymouth	$750-$1,250	2.9	6.9	7.9	9.9	None
Chrysler Motors (1990 models)						
Dodge cars	**$750-$1,000**	**2.9**	**6.9**	**7.9**	**9.9**	**None**
Eagle Summit	**$1,000**	**2.9**	**6.9**	**7.9**	**9.9**	**None**
Plymouth	**$750-$1,000**	**2.9**	**6.9**	**7.9**	**9.9**	**None**
Chrysler Motors (1990 models, guaranteed rebates*)						
Chrysler	**$1,000**	**2.9**	**6.9**	**7.9**	**9.9**	**Mar. 31**
Dodge cars	**$750-$1,500**	**2.9**	**6.9**	**7.9**	**9.9**	**Mar. 31**
Dodge trucks	**$1,000 - $2,000**	**2.9**	**6.9**	**7.9**	**9.9**	**Mar. 31**
Eagle	**$750-$2,000**	**2.9**	**6.9**	**7.9**	**9.9**	**Mar. 31**
Jeep	**$500-$1,000**	**2.9**	**6.9**	**7.9**	**9.9**	**Mar. 31**
Plymouth	**$750-$1,000**	**2.9**	**6.9**	**7.9**	**9.9**	**Mar. 31**

**—Buyer will receive any increase in rebate through Sept. 30, 1990.

Ford Motor Co. (1989 models)						
Ford cars*	$750-$1,000	6.9	6.9	6.9	10.9	April 2
Ford trucks	$500-$1,500	6.9	6.9	6.9	10.9	April 2
Continental, Mark VII	$1,500					April 2
Mercury*	$750-$1,500	6.9	6.9	6.9	10.9	April 2

*—Ford Escort and Mercury Tracer buyers get cash rebate and 6.9 percent financing.

Ford Motor Co. (1990 models)						
Ford cars*	**$750-$1,000**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**April 2**
Ford trucks	**$500-$1,500**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**April 2**
Continental, Mark VII	**$1,500**					**April 2**
Mercury*	**$750-$1,500**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**April 2**

**—Ford Escort and Mercury Tracer buyers get cash rebate and 6.9 percent financing.

General Motors (1989 models)						
Chevrolet cars	$700-$1,000	6.9	6.9	6.9	10.9	May 2
Chevrolet trucks	$500-$1,500	6.9	6.9	6.9	10.9	May 2
Cadillac	$1,500*	5.9	6.9	7.9		Mar. 31
GMC trucks	$750-$1,500	6.9	6.9	6.9	10.9	May 2
Cutlass Supreme	$1,500	6.9	6.9	6.9	10.9	May 2
Pontiac	$750-$1,000	6.9	6.9	6.9	10.9	May 2

*—Cadillac owners and certificate holders only

General Motors (1990 models)						
Buick	**$500-$1,250***	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**May 2**
Riviera	**$1,500**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**May 2**
Chevrolet cars	**$700-$1,000**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**May 2**
Chevrolet trucks	**$500-$1,500**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**May 2**
GMC trucks	**$750-$1,500**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**May 2**
Olds Toronado	**$1,500**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**May 2**
Cutlass Supreme	**$2,000**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**May 2**
Silhouette	**$1,000**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**May 2**
Pontiac	**$750-$2,000**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**May 2**
Trans Sport	**$1,000**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**6.9**	**10.9**	**May 2**

*—Based on option package selected

Hyundai Excel (1990 models)	**$750-$1,000**					**April 3**
Mazda (1990 models)						
626	**$1,000**					**April 3**
MX-6	**$750**					**April 3**
Trucks	**$750-$1,000**					**April 3**
Nissan (1988-1989 models)						
Sentra	$1,000-$1,250					May 2
Trucks	$1,200-$1,500					May 2
Nissan (1990 models)						
Sentra	**$1,000**					**May 2**
Trucks	**$1,200**					**May 2**
Peugeot (1989-90)	**$1,000-$3,000**					**None**
Sterling (1989 models)	$5,000					Mar. 31
Suzuki (1989 models)						
Swift	$500-$2,000					Mar. 31
Samurai	$1,000					Mar. 31
Sidekick	$500-$3,000					Mar. 31

MINIVANS

FROM PAGE 3

rate of 225,000 units annually in May.

"We're starting to get production in place, and we think the spring selling season is a good time to move (the APVs)," Erdman said.

Dealers said the $1,000 rebate and more advertising will help boost sales. They said the vehicle hasn't caught on with customers, but they expect it will, eventually. The radical design, which features an aerodynamic body and steeply raked windshield, intimidates customers initially, dealers said.

Jack Fowler, new-car sales manager at Capitol Chevrolet in Montgomery, Ala., said the dealership, which sells 700 to 800 vehicles a month, has sold only four Lumina APVs since the October introduction. He sold one of the five on his lot last week, just after the rebate went into effect.

"The $1,000 rebate will help," Fowler said. "It'll take time for customers to get used to" the minivan.

Meanwhile, Chrysler says sales of its minivans haven't been hurt by new competition from GM and other automakers.

"If anything, they are tending to increase the segment," Chrysler Motors Chairman Bennett Bidwell said last week.

But GM and some analysts insist the GM models are cutting into Chrysler's business and are optimistic about their success.

Wendy Beale Needham, analyst with the New York securities firm Smith Barney, said that while the minivan market has expanded, it also appears that both GM, with its new models without incentives, and Ford, with the extended version of its Aerostar, gained market share at Chrysler's expense in the last quarter of 1989.

Erdman said test drives are "critical" in selling the futuristic-looking vehicles. The long snout and instrument panel worry some potential buyers.

But not all dealers are pushing test drives. As a result, Erdman said, Chevrolet may consider paying an incentive to the customer to test drive the vehicle or to the salesperson for giving a demonstration ride.

Automotive News Staff Reporter Mary Connelly contributed to this report.

APV SALES

		Lumina	Silhouette	Trans Sport	Total
Oct.	89	1,806	310	859	2,977
Nov.	89	3,119	886	1,104	5,109
Dec.	89	4,849	926	1,263	7,038
Jan.	90	3,472	1,348	1,938	6,758
Feb.	90	3,623	1,630	1,794	7,047
Total		16,871	5,100	6,958	28,929

INCENTIVE WATCH

DEALER INCENTIVES

	Rebate	Expiration Date
Chrysler (1989 models)		
TC by Maserati	$6,000	None
General Motors (1989 models)		
Buick	$750-$2,000	May 2
Chevrolet Nova, Spectrum (1988)	$500	May 2
Geo, Celebrity	$500	May 2
Geo Tracker	$1,000	May 2
Oldsmobile	$500-$2,500	May 2
Pontiac LeMans, Grand Am	$500	May 2
Grand Prix	$1,000	April 2
Grand Prix	$500	April 3-May 2
General Motors (1990 models)		
Buick Park Avenue, Estate Wagon, Riviera, Reatta	**$1,000-$2,000**	**May 2**
Cadillac	**$1,000**	**Mar. 31**
Chevrolet Geo, Celebrity	**$500-$1,000**	**May 2**
Geo Tracker	**$1,000**	**May 2**
Oldsmobile	**$500-$1,000, quota**	**May 2**
Pontiac Firebird	**$300-$500**	**May 2**
Grand Prix	**$500**	**May 2**
Isuzu (1989 models)		
Impulse, I-Mark	$300	Mar. 31
Trooper	$500-$1,500, quota	Mar. 31
Pickup	$500-$700	Mar. 31
Isuzu (1990 models)		
Trooper	**$500-$1,500, quota**	**Mar. 31**
Pickup	**$500-$700, quota**	**Mar. 31**
Mitsubishi (1989-90 models)		
Cars	**$500-$1,000**	**Mar. 31**
Trucks	**$1,000**	**Mar. 31**
Nissan		
Stanza (1989-90)	**$500-$1,000**	**May 2**
Axxess (1990)	**$1,000**	**May 2**
Pathfinder (1989)	**$1,500**	**May 2**
Saab (1989 models)	$3,000-$5,000	April 30
Subaru (1989 models)		
Justy ECVT	$1,200	May 2
Other Justy	$500	May 2
XT, XT6	$1,500	May 2
Subaru (1990 models)		
Loyale	**$400**	**May 2**
Legacy	**$500-$1,500**	**May 2**
Suzuki (1990 models)		
Swift	**$400**	**Mar. 31**
Sidekick	**$700-$1,500**	**Mar. 31**
Volkswagen (1989 models)		
Cars	$600-$2,500	None
Vanagon	$3,000-$4,000	None

GM sweetens incentives; BMW joins in

By Michelle Krebs and Jim Henry
AUTOMOTIVE NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Chevrolet, Buick and BMW of North America Inc. announced incentives last week.

Pontiac and Oldsmobile increased the cash rebate on the slow-selling Grand Prix and Cutlass Supreme, respectively.

Oldsmobile doubled its previous $1,000 cash rebate on Cutlass Supreme, based on a successful program in its Eastern region.

Pontiac is offering a $2,000 rebate on the Grand Prix, depending on dealer participation. Dealers must kick in $500 of the $2,000. If they don't, the rebate is $1,000.

Chevrolet's long list of consumer incentives has grown to include a $1,000 rebate on Geo Prizm and $500 on the extended Astro van.

Buick is paying a $1,500 rebate on Riviera.

"Riviera sales in 1989 were up 64 percent over 1988, and 1990 sales through early March were 9 percent ahead of last year," said Robert E. Coletta, Buick general sales and service manager. "We want to maintain or increase that momentum into the spring, and that is why we've decided to offer these incentives."

The incentive comes a week after Oldsmobile announced a $1,500 cash rebate or cut-rate financing on its Toronado. Oldsmobile's incentive runs through the end of the model year.

BMW is offering special lease and financing rates on its entry-level 3 series. Through April 30, BMW Credit Corp. is offering what amounts to a 3-year lease with the same monthly payments as a 5-year lease on 1990 325i and 325is 2-door and 4-door sedans. A 10 percent "capitalized cost reduction payment," in effect a down payment, is required.

Through April 30, BMW is offering finance rates ranging from 2.9 percent for a 24-month loan to 7.9 percent on a 60-month loan on the 1990 325i; and from 4.9 percent for a 24-month loan to 8.9 percent for a 60-month loan on the 325is. A 10 percent down payment is required.

Also, through May 31, 3-series drivers with a year or less remaining on a lease may terminate their present lease early if they lease a new 1990 3-series BMW.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Truck output of 91,160 is 1990 high

By Karen Detkowski
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

U.S. truckmakers last week scheduled their highest production so far this year.

Targeted output of 91,160 trucks was 7.18 percent above the prior week and 25.63 percent over the year-ago week.

So far this year, 863,044 trucks have been built, 20.09 percent below the year-ago total.

Scheduled assembly of 140,243 cars last week rose 3.32 percent over the previous week and 9.99 percent above the year-ago week.

The year-ago week's production was reduced by the Good Friday holiday, when all plants were closed except Toyota's Georgetown, Ky., facility.

Year-to-date, 1,307,973 cars have been assembled, 26.25 percent below 1989.

Companies split last week's scheduled production as follows: General Motors, 43.01 percent; Ford Motor Co., 25.73 percent; Chrysler Motors, 11.23 percent; Honda of America Manufacturing Inc., 6.72 percent; Toyota Motor Manufacturing U.S.A. Inc., 3.17 percent; Mazda Motor Manufacturing (USA) Corp., 3.09 percent; New United Motor Manufacturing Inc., 2.92 percent; Diamond-Star Motors Corp., 2.13 percent; Nissan Motor Manufacturing Corp. U.S.A., 1.70 percent; and Subaru-Isuzu Automotive Inc., 0.30 percent.

GM scheduled Saturday overtime last week at the following truck assembly plants: Baltimore; Flint, Mich.; Pontiac (Mich.) East; and Moraine, Ohio.

Also working last Saturday were GM's Orion Township, Mich., car plant and the Buick City car facility in Flint. The Janesville, Wis., plant was scheduled for Friday overtime.

Ford slated overtime last Saturday at its Wixom, Mich., car facility and the Louisville, Ky., truck plant.

Car build dips 15% in Canada

Canadian auto output was estimated at 22,396 units last week, 15.39 percent below the previous week but 30.69 percent over the year-ago week.

So far this year, 231,960 cars have been assembled, 1.13 percent below the 1989 total at this point.

Truckmakers' targeted output of 20,299 units was 0.45 percent below the prior week, but 27.44 percent above the year-ago week.

Year-to-date, 207,514 trucks have been assembled, 13.80 percent below 1989's tally.

The year-ago week's output was affected by the Good Friday closing of all plants.

Chrysler Motors closed its Bramalea, Ontario, assembly plant last week for six weeks because of slow sales of the Eagle Premier and the new Dodge Monaco. Days' supplies for the two models were 190 and 292, respectively on March 1. The plant has been closed seven of this year's 11 weeks.

U.S. CAR	Week Ended Mar. 24, 1990	Week Ended Mar. 25, 1989	Week Ended Mar. 17, 1990	Mar to Date	Jan. 1 to Mar. 24, 1990	Jan. 1 to Mar. 25, 1989
Horizon	0	211	0	0	4,578	200
Sundance	1,900	1,944	1,986	6,684	16,963	27,979
Acclaim	1,900	2,342	2,105	6,888	18,117	26,943
Total Plymouth	3,800	4,497	4,091	13,572	39,658	55,122
LeBaron A	800	0	814	2,763	5,057	0
LeBaron J	1,400	1,833	1,386	4,630	7,043	26,680
LeBaron GTS	0	0	0	0	0	2,946
N. Yorker C-Class	500	1,685	526	1,811	4,683	30,643
Fifth Avenue	700	0	710	2,424	6,298	0
Imperial	550	0	547	1,903	4,982	0
Total Chrysler	3,950	3,718	3,983	13,532	28,063	60,269
Omni	0	308	0	0	4,308	200
Daytona	900	1,829	906	3,029	4,630	26,730
Shadow	2,100	1,888	2,184	7,317	19,353	28,565
Dynasty	3,000	2,386	3,162	10,660	27,488	38,483
Lancer	0	0	0	0	0	1,528
Spirit	2,000	1,955	2,057	6,922	20,027	25,070
Total Dodge	8,000	8,366	8,309	27,928	75,806	120,576
CHRYSLER MOTORS	15,750	16,581	16,383	55,032	143,527	235,967
Escort	5,102	5,656	4,485	14,855	33,924	87,053
Mustang	3,705	3,451	3,695	12,497	36,028	49,861
Tempo	3,053	2,411	2,776	10,041	28,016	40,143
Taurus	8,260	6,277	7,920	27,186	90,102	94,052
Thunderbird	2,924	3,088	3,372	10,946	26,263	43,247
Total Ford Div.	23,044	20,883	22,248	75,525	214,333	314,356
Topaz	1,677	1,197	1,734	5,428	11,079	15,524
Cougar	2,678	2,280	2,245	8,040	16,432	37,002
Sable	3,012	3,103	2,812	9,711	23,392	32,669
Total Mercury	7,367	6,580	6,791	23,180	50,903	85,195
Continental	1,256	1,145	1,093	4,046	12,896	17,820
Mark VII	626	379	536	2,012	6,403	7,189
Town Car	3,788	2,284	3,271	12,155	38,776	31,779
Total Lincoln	5,670	3,808	4,900	18,214	58,075	56,788
Total L-M Div.	13,037	10,388	11,691	41,394	108,978	141,983
FORD MOTOR CO.	36,081	31,271	33,939	116,919	323,311	456,339
Skyhawk	0	153	0	0	0	8,777
Skylark/Somerset	2,015	1,054	2,512	6,681	17,766	12,503
Century	1,470	1,858	1,417	5,135	15,455	30,021
Riviera	545	420	529	1,835	5,116	7,039
Electra	0	1,557	0	0	12,317	19,686
LeSabre (fwd)	3,906	3,829	3,097	13,393	35,709	22,747
LeSabre (rwd)	178	128	188	632	1,557	2,323
Reatta	209	162	206	699	1,929	1,635
Total Buick	8,323	9,161	7,949	28,375	89,849	104,731
Eldorado	640	790	621	1,888	4,659	8,992
Seville	705	478	689	2,282	6,143	6,739
Brougham (rwd)	1,100	543	1,032	3,574	9,101	11,132
DeVille (fwd)	4,542	3,921	3,788	13,474	34,904	53,587
Allante	87	60	89	301	791	864
Total Cadillac	7,074	5,792	6,219	21,518	55,598	81,314
Cavalier	7,955	4,992	7,726	26,519	65,935	92,204
Camaro	1,810	2,239	1,632	6,969	9,838	28,997
Celebrity	0	1,859	0	0	0	39,536
Corsica/Beretta	6,160	7,443	5,912	20,072	63,382	106,074
Caprice	3,090	3,572	2,940	10,153	27,203	47,878
Corvette	560	504	560	1,904	5,040	6,148
Total Chevrolet	19,575	20,609	18,770	65,618	171,398	320,837
Calais	2,035	1,864	2,042	6,917	18,762	21,464
Cutlass Ciera	2,488	1,455	2,561	8,426	20,484	19,979
Cutlass Supreme	1,983	2,869	1,953	6,540	18,536	24,396
Toronado	390	160	382	1,610	5,136	2,770
88 (fwd)	2,334	2,739	1,926	5,947	18,048	38,544
88 (rwd)	120	87	88	334	943	1,816
98	1,714	1,736	1,412	5,054	13,081	22,485
Total Oldsmobile	11,064	10,910	10,364	34,826	94,990	131,454
Sunbird	3,525	2,898	3,408	12,275	27,747	34,631
Grand Am	4,800	4,163	4,808	16,378	38,119	59,875
Firebird	1,233	1,054	1,310	3,825	4,854	17,967
Grand Prix	3,078	2,978	3,017	10,107	21,659	31,249
Pontiac 6000	1,628	1,460	1,727	5,717	14,128	22,014
Bonneville	0	2,342	0	0	13,984	20,957
Safari/Parisienne	0	76	0	0	0	1,270
Total Pontiac	14,264	14,971	14,270	48,302	120,491	187,963
GENERAL MOTORS	60,300	61,443	57,572	198,638	532,326	826,299
DIAMOND-STAR	2,993	876	2,601	9,409	31,665	8,243
HONDA	9,430	6,144	9,348	31,212	103,142	92,418
Civic	3,090	2,054	2,668	8,764	30,120	30,846
Accord	6,340	4,090	6,680	22,449	73,022	61,572
MAZDA†	4,334	3,837	4,537	14,766	43,075	57,789
NISSAN	2,380	2,058	2,390	8,080	27,734	27,481
NUMMI	4,100	3,218	4,103	14,259	47,682	45,945
Corolla	2,100	1,312	2,207	7,579	24,970	19,493
Geo Prizm/Nova	2,000	1,906	1,896	6,679	22,712	26,452
SUBARU-ISUZU	425	0	407	1,376	4,024	0
TOYOTA	4,450	2,074	4,451	15,072	51,487	23,018
Total Cars, U.S.	140,243	127,502	135,731	464,764	1,307,973	1,773,499
Total Cars, Canada	22,396	17,148	26,471	85,256	231,960	234,615
U.S., Canada Cars	162,639	144,650	162,202	550,020	1,539,933	2,008,114
U.S., Canada Cars and Trucks	274,098	233,140	267,648	917,099	2,610,491	3,328,817

Monthly estimates may contain error of one or two units due to rounding.
†—Total includes MX-6, 626, and Ford Probe
*—Estimated

CANADIAN CAR	Week Ended Mar. 24, 1990	Week Ended Mar. 25, 1989	Week Ended Mar. 17, 1990	Mar to Date	Jan. 1 to Mar. 24, 1990	Jan. 1 to Mar. 25, 1989
Monaco	0	0	718	1,699	3,593	0
Premier	0	1,010	557	851	1,252	11,305
CHRYSLER MOTORS	0	1,010	1,275	2,550	4,845	11,305
Tempo	3,428	2,682	3,222	11,229	30,902	42,235
Topaz	1,468	1,139	1,380	4,457	9,701	16,871
Crown Victoria	3,134	2,410	2,970	10,368	26,973	31,926
Grand Marquis	2,626	2,401	2,643	10,082	27,511	33,432
FORD MOTOR CO.	10,656	8,632	10,215	36,136	95,087	124,464
Celebrity	0	140	1,006	2,291	5,305	2,291
Cutlass Ciera	0	3,025	2,554	6,185	22,303	43,744
Lumina	6,121	1,206	5,833	19,868	49,220	7,292
Regal	1,879	1,367	1,614	5,108	9,383	22,701
GENERAL MOTORS	8,000	5,738	11,007	33,452	86,211	76,028
HONDA	2,100	1,414	2,373	7,600	26,895	19,481
HYUNDAI*	310	0	310	1,054	3,740	0
TOYOTA	1,150	210	1,111	3,852	13,096	1,304
VOLVO	180	144	180	612	2,086	2,033
Total Cars, Canada	22,396	17,148	26,471	85,256	231,960	234,615

U.S. TRUCK	Week Ended Mar. 24, 1990	Week Ended Mar. 25, 1989	Week Ended Mar. 17, 1990	Mar to Date	Jan. 1 to Mar. 24, 1990	Jan. 1 to Mar. 25, 1989
Caravan	1,900	1,685	2,000	7,284	27,851	26,831
Dakota	1,500	1,959	1,605	5,866	14,883	26,734
Caravan C/V	100	155	136	459	1,766	2,331
Ram pickups	2,300	1,967	2,375	8,817	21,300	26,710
Total Dodge	5,800	5,766	6,116	22,426	65,800	82,606
Cherokee	4,400	3,614	4,451	15,189	40,117	53,787
Comanche	200	493	308	783	1,901	8,393
Grand Wagoneer	0	280	0	325	910	3,949
Wagoneer	100	137	116	352	832	2,384
Total Jeep	4,700	4,524	4,875	16,649	43,760	68,513
Voyager	1,900	1,580	2,119	7,489	26,217	25,883
Town & Country	50	0	65	232	877	0
Total C-P Div.	1,950	1,580	2,184	7,721	27,094	25,883
CHRYSLER MOTORS	12,450	11,870	13,175	46,795	136,654	177,002
Aerostar	4,615	3,990	4,164	14,470	40,080	57,478
Bronco	1,188	1,450	1,137	3,943	12,517	22,758
Bronco II/Explorer	2,426	2,278	1,369	4,752	19,675	33,615
Econoline	4,307	4,159	4,346	14,681	40,532	60,062
Mediums/Heavies	1,067	1,151	1,069	3,604	20,915	16,446
Light trucks	9,786	9,027	9,803	33,183	99,924	131,876
Ranger	8,204	6,145	6,857	25,565	68,873	88,392
Total Ford Div.	31,593	28,200	28,745	100,199	302,516	410,627
FORD MOTOR CO.	31,593	28,200	28,745	100,199	302,516	410,627
Astro	3,418	2,933	3,042	10,590	23,050	41,370
Blazer	461	564	434	1,297	3,419	6,670
Lumina APV	2,000	0	2,166	6,895	22,050	0
Mediums/Heavies	336	0	311	1,008	3,566	0
P-Model	628	684	0	1,323	4,956	7,188
Pickups	7,990	6,999	7,830	26,970	72,135	107,740
S-10	5,287	4,257	4,836	17,376	55,124	70,151
S-10 Blazer	4,446	3,313	4,331	13,858	26,790	46,701
Sportsvan/Van	1,750	1,691	1,746	5,839	11,684	22,617
Suburban	1,935	1,153	1,604	5,908	14,523	18,676
Total Chevrolet	28,251	21,594	26,300	91,066	237,297	321,113
Jimmy	153	148	124	405	1,166	2,068
Mediums/Heavies	543	0	408	1,594	4,556	0
P-Model	72	29	0	202	648	1,001
Pickups	2,539	817	1,903	7,855	19,744	29,788
S-15	1,117	1,156	1,096	3,674	13,065	16,641
S-15 Jimmy	1,510	1,041	1,056	4,073	8,922	13,166
Safari	1,094	649	728	2,864	7,296	10,433
Suburban	821	450	638	2,392	6,318	7,424
Vandura/Rally Vans	710	420	717	2,552	5,273	5,921
Total GMC	8,559	4,710	6,670	25,613	66,988	86,442
Olds Silhouette	583	0	518	1,875	6,768	0
Pontiac Trans Sport	1,138	0	1,035	3,729	13,546	0
GENERAL MOTORS	38,531	26,304	34,523	122,282	324,599	407,555
NAVISTAR	1,640	1,534	1,660	5,183	17,912	20,375
NISSAN	3,060	2,454	3,081	10,401	35,674	32,500
SUBARU-ISUZU	436	0	421	1,487	4,239	0
AM GENERAL*	450	360	450	1,530	5,400	5,220
MISCELLANEOUS*	3,000	1,840	3,000	10,200	36,000	26,680
Total Trucks, U.S.	91,160	72,562	85,055	298,076	863,044	1,079,959

CANADIAN TRUCK	Week Ended Mar. 24, 1990	Week Ended Mar. 25, 1989	Week Ended Mar. 17, 1990	Mar. to Date	Jan. 1 to Mar. 24, 1990	Jan. 1 to Mar. 25, 1989
Caravan	3,270	2,097	3,325	11,218	39,019	36,951
Caravan C/V	294	149	307	1,017	2,803	2,360
Ram Wagon	540	534	543	1,815	5,048	7,201
Ram Van	1,380	1,403	1,393	4,760	12,567	18,471
Total Dodge	5,484	4,183	5,568	18,809	59,437	64,983
Voyager	2,580	1,943	2,620	8,887	31,992	32,350
Total Plymouth	2,580	1,943	2,620	8,887	31,992	32,350
Wrangler	1,500	1,492	1,551	5,217	9,243	18,524
Total Jeep	1,500	1,492	1,551	5,217	9,243	18,524
CHRYSLER MOTORS	9,564	7,618	9,739	32,913	100,672	115,857
FORD MTR. (lt. trks.)	3,192	3,054	3,196	10,800	32,450	40,598
Light trucks	3,854	2,925	3,525	13,374	42,547	39,165
Vans	1,415	990	1,325	4,508	9,217	16,582
Total Chevrolet	5,269	3,915	4,850	17,881	51,764	55,747
Light trucks	1,514	531	1,757	4,610	16,302	17,831
Vans	535	593	625	2,041	3,879	7,840
Total GMC	2,049	1,124	2,382	6,651	20,181	25,671
GENERAL MOTORS	7,318	5,039	7,232	24,533	71,945	81,418
NAVISTAR	225	217	224	758	2,447	2,871
Total Trks., Canada	20,299	15,928	20,391	69,003	207,514	240,744
U.S., Canada Trks.	111,459	88,490	105,446	367,080	1,070,558	1,320,703

*—Estimated
Miscellaneous includes estimates for Mack, Volvo-White, Kenworth, Peterbilt, Freightliner, Mercedes-Benz, etc.